

The St. Tammany Parish Public School District is located on the north shore of Lake Ponchartrain, 30 miles north of New Orleans, Louisiana. The district educates more than 35,500 students in 54 school buildings that occupy approximately 5 million square feet of floor space. The district is the largest employer in the parish, staffing over 5,000 people. Of this number, approximately 3,000 are teachers. The district has an annual budget of over \$330,000,000. Its constant commitment to improvement and to high performance has made the St. Tammany Parish Public School District a leader in the state of Louisiana by all major standards of educational excellence.

Over the last several years, energy costs for the school district have continued to rapidly rise creating great apprehension that important instructional and operational functions in schools would have to be reduced or eliminated. On average, the cost of energy was increasing by \$400,000 per year. At the same time, school administrators were asking for more funding to meet the increasing expenses of educating students. It was at this juncture of competing demands for precious educational funding provided by the taxpaying community that the district implemented an Energy Management Program with two goals: 1) reduce energy usage by at least 10% district-wide and 2) share these energy savings with the schools so that they could be used for instructional purposes.

In July of 2006, the district brought together and masterfully orchestrated a district-wide line-up of partners for the Energy Management Program which included School Board members, central office administrators, maintenance department staff, custodial services staff, principals, teachers, students, parents, community members, and the Environmental Protection Agency's Energy Star Program. A key element of the program included the creation of a departmental energy management team that works closely with program partners to compile and track energy data, identify energy savings opportunities, and oversee improvements. Other key elements include the St. Tammany Parish School Board Energy Management Policy, energy-savings procedures, guidelines, materials and resources, annual energy savings goal of greater than 10%, continuous tracking of energy usage and cost avoidance, and monthly energy tracking feedback to all principals and administrators.

Successful efficiency measures which the Energy Management Program put into action include launching operational and awareness campaigns, focusing on the maintenance of HVAC and lighting systems and equipment, installing motion sensors in school rooms, reviewing and modifying both indoor and outdoor lighting schedules and thermostat set points, expanding the use of automated energy management systems, optimization of existing energy management systems with remote monitoring and control via the Internet, optimization of equipment operation and maintenance practices, summer shutdown and cleaning procedures, behavioral training for teachers and students, an energy awareness curriculum (environmental science, ecology, conservation, etc.) correlated to State standards in science, social studies, math and language arts, recognition for high performing schools and facilities, custodian and maintenance mechanic training, monitoring of billing errors, collaboration with the construction department on energy efficiency in new buildings and renovation, and purchasing ENERGY STAR qualified high efficiency lighting, office equipment, and appliances whenever possible.

To date, the Energy Management Program has helped the district's 54 schools and 16 administrative facilities to achieve a combined reduction in energy use of 18.1 percent. From December of 2006 to December of 2009, the district has reduced its overall energy consumption by 89,968,675 kBtu. These savings represents an avoidance of \$3,568,918 in energy costs. In addition, the Energy Management Program has afforded schools an annual increase of \$20 per student for instructional purposes.

The Energy Management Program has recently received three noteworthy recognitions. First, the St. Tammany Parish Public School District is the first school district in State of Louisiana to establish a partnership with the Environmental Protection Agency's ENERGY STAR Program. Second, the St. Tammany Parish Public School District celebrated its first ENERGY STAR qualified building, the Instructional Technology Center (ITC), which earned the distinction in 2008. The ITC is the first and only school district facility in the State of Louisiana to receive the Environmental Protection Agency's ENERGY STAR Label. The Label indicates that the ITC is among the top 25% of facilities in the country for energy performance. And third, the St. Tammany Parish Public School District is the first and only school district in the State of Louisiana to received the ENERGY STAR Leaders Award for 10% Improvement in energy usage. As the EPA notes regarding the district's Leaders Award, "Owning a building that achieves top energy performance is a sign of good management; owning a portfolio of buildings that achieve continuous improvement in energy performance demonstrates superior management and environmental leadership."

Today, the St. Tammany Public School District views energy efficiency as an important opportunity to teach students about environmental protection and reduce operating costs. As a result, the district strives to improve

energy performance to maximize the funds available for instructional programs and support services and to educate every student and employee about the environmental benefits of energy efficiency.